

‘I feel like I can’t do a lot’: Affectivity, Reflection and Action in ‘Transformative’

Genocide Education

Kim Sadique & James Tangen

De Montfort University

Abstract

Guided tours of memorial museums have sought to have an impact on visitors through an affective learning environment and critical reflection leading to ‘action’. However, there is limited work investigating the pedagogical underpinnings of such guided tours in order to understand whether they can facilitate action. This paper presents reflections of 21 students’ experiences of educational visits to the former Nazi extermination and concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland between 2017 and 2018. Students identified the guided tour of Auschwitz-Birkenau as having an affective dimension that enhanced understanding and brought about a perspective transformation but action was ill-defined. In considering ill-defined action this paper attempts to frame understanding of the guided tour of the memorial museum within the context of Transformative Learning. It concludes that guiding practices should incorporate space for reflection and provide examples of potential ‘action’ so that visitors can mobilise their deeper understanding and experience long-term personal ‘change’.

Introduction

Over the last ten years there has been increasing interest within the field of peace education in ‘genocide education’, the provision of guided tours and educational programmes at sites where crimes against humanity and human rights abuses have been committed. Examples of genocide education projects include the former Nazi extermination and concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau (Memorial Museum) and the Srebrenica Memorial Centre. Podolska (2019) notes the intended outcomes of such provision are for visitors to deepen their understanding, feel

empathy, reflect, take responsibility and be motivated to 'act'. The ultimate goal of genocide education is that it should consist not only in providing accurate information but also 'promoting reflection and motivating people to act against evil' Bartuś (2019: 92). However, despite these intentions, educators/guides at memorial sites often acknowledge feelings of failure and disappointment because they are 'educating all the time and it [genocide] is happening again' (Bartyzel, 2019: 15). However, peace education, and by extension 'genocide' education, is not simply about the transmission of knowledge but also the reflective and participatory capacities for applying what has been learned in order to achieve peace (Reardon, 2000); it should be transformative (Harris, 1996; Hicks, 1988, Reardon, 1988; 2000). These fundamentals of peace education, namely reflection and application of learning (action) need to be incorporated into guided tours at memorial museums. Furthermore, the factors that facilitate or impede such learning need consideration.

Peace Education and Transformative Learning

Peace education is an area of practice which utilises teaching and learning to (re)build and maintain peace and justice (Bajaj and Hantzopoulos, 2016). It incorporates learning around conflict prevention, conflict resolution, alternatives to violence, community building and the creation of the social conditions required for peace. Peace education is delivered in both formal and non-formal educational settings and to people of all ages. Bajaj & Hantzopoulos state that Peace education requires 'transforming content, pedagogy, structures, educational practices, relationships between educators and learners, and the systems by which we measure the outcomes of education' (2016:3). Bajaj (2016) argues that as experience facilitates the internalisation of values, peace education should be liberated from the 'exclusively cognitive approach to teaching' and from the classroom (Bajaj, 2016:112). In addressing these fundamentals of peace education an important area of focus is the pedagogic purposes and

intended learning outcomes of the numerous global genocide education projects and memorial museums such as Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum, Srebrenica Memorial Centre, and other education projects at sites where crimes against humanity and human rights abuses were committed.

Reardon's (2000) notion of fostering reflective and participatory capacities parallels both Freire's (1970) concept of 'Conscientization' which focuses on the 'oppressed' as learner, observing the situation of their oppression (Ardizzone, 2001) and Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning theory, which has wider educational application across the field of adult learning. For both Reardon and Mezirow, education is where understanding is deepened, frames of reference/worldviews are altered, and learners reflect and develop a course of action to 'do something' to bring about change. Transformative Learning has primarily been developed and considered within formal 'classroom-based' learning contexts and there is a need for evaluation of the theory in more diverse contexts including in less formal educational settings (John, 2016). This paper, therefore, examines attempts to foster transformative learning within the context of genocide education in a non-formal educational setting: that of a guided tour of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial & Museum. It will demonstrate how central affectivity and reflection are to learning at an authentic memorial site and consider whether this is enough to lead to 'action' as intended by both transformative learning and the wider field of peace education.

The concept of reflection has become a mainstay within the fields of adult and higher education. Mezirow's (1981, 1991, 2000, 2009) theory of transformative learning, also known as the theory of reflectivity, proffers one of the most highly-developed conceptualisations of reflection within a wider theory of adult learning. However, his theory has been criticised for

overstating the rational and cognitive factors, with limited attention paid to the affective dimension (Clark and Wilson, 1991; Dirkx, 2008; Illeris, 2004; Mezirow, 2009, Taylor, 2000). Illeris (2002) notes there are three dimensions to learning, of which 'the 'affective' dimension is one. This affective dimension involves emotions, feelings, moods or attitudes (Arnold and Brown, 1999) which are situationally expressed and how these influence our decision-making and behaviour. Martin and Reigeluth (1999) identify six dimensions of 'affective learning': emotional, social, aesthetic, moral, spiritual and motivational. Empirical studies have shown that emotions and safe relationships are inextricably intertwined with the process of reflection (Brookfield, 1994; Mälkki, 2010; Taylor, 1997, 2000, 2007, 2008). Critical reflection, the examination of one's own beliefs, assumptions and judgements, is not only enabled and enhanced by affectivity but it fundamentally has an affective dimension (Maiese, 2017).

Taylor (2001) moves this discussion on through a neurobiological approach to understanding the role of emotions in rationality where 'feelings are found to be the rudder for reason' (Taylor, 2001: 234). He argues, that without feelings, rationality has limited direction and influence on decision-making processes. Taylor (2001) further contends that implicit memory, a form of long-term memory that functions outside of the conscious awareness of the learner, is vital to rationality and argues that transformative learning needs to consider 'other ways of knowing' (Taylor, 2001:218) which challenges Mezirow's overreliance on critical reflection in personal transformation. The ease with which an individual may access unconscious ways of knowing, and without the need for the individual to be aware they are doing so, may mean that emotions function as a catalyst for reflection on existing structures of meaning and the development of new frameworks for knowing. Indeed, while Mezirow's transformative learning does not necessarily lead to social action, where individuals do engage in a deeper, more persistent re-orientation to social activism the realisation of new ways to influence the world is underpinned by an affective dimension (Aedo, et al., 2019).

Genocide Education as Transformative Learning

Genocide education, like peace education, is better delivered outside of the classroom (Bajaj, 2016) where the short-term experience can provide learning that facilitates deeper understanding (Wright, 2000). Genocide education takes place in various types of 'space' but this paper addresses only those that are sites where crimes against humanity were committed. Many of these identify as genocide/memorial museums or centres and use the 'guided tour' as their main educational tool. Slovic (2007) explains that we cannot grasp the reality of such events until we see where they happened for ourselves and hear the story of many through the story of one. In developing the space to discuss such provision at these sites, Brown (2008) talks about the pedagogic purposes of museums [such as Auschwitz-Birkenau] particularly to 'instil empathy and disgust' in the visitor through emphasising 'individual agency, thoughtfulness and responsibility' [for the consequences of our own action or inaction] (Brown, 2008: 119). Such an emotional stimulus aims to cause the visitor to reflect on and learn from the narratives and images presented.

Emotions are relevant for processes of interactional learning, with some scholars postulating that affective states are principally generated by a process of appraisal as a function of the meaning they attribute to a particular situation (Lazarus, 1991; Scherer, Schorr and Johnstone, 2001). Such appraisals may only be partially verbalised, may not be conscious (Taylor, 2001) and can take place at the level of 'thought-sensation' (Cahour, 2013: 59), which influences learners' emotional response and the overall affective environment for others present. The meanings attributed to particular situations and therefore the emotions generated, whether consciously or not, may be influenced by feeling rules and conventions internalised through

socialisation and then managed within the social context (Hochschild, 1979). Although emotions and affectivity have recently been considered within transformative learning (Maiese, 2017; Mälkki, 2010; Taylor, 1998; 2001; 2008), the non-conscious appraisal (Cahour, 2013) and the social context of feeling rules, conventions and emotions management have not. By considering Hochschild's (1979) work on emotions and 'feeling rules' we can extend the work of Mezirow to understand more fully how individuals assess their world views and meaning perspectives and how they interact with and respond to situations and others on an emotional level.

Hochschild (1979) argues that like thought and behaviour, emotions are subject to social rules and conventions. These 'feeling rules' (*ibid*: 551) provide the ideological framework within which the individual considers the emotions they are expected to feel. Emotions then, can be and often are, subject to acts of management with an individual trying to control their feelings so as to render them "appropriate" to a given situation in accordance with the perceived set of feeling rules. As such, visiting a genocide museum should evoke in the visitor feelings of sadness, anger, disgust, empathy (Brown, 2008) because these are the feeling rules and conventions. However, breaches of the feeling rules and conventions which present unsuitable affect (Goffman, 1961) may negatively impact on the learning experience. Therefore, the feeling rules may either facilitate or impede learning through supporting or disrupting the ideal conditions for the full realisation of learning (Mezirow, 1997).

Research Context

The authors are social scientists interested in state crime, delivering undergraduate level programmes to those who intend to work in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). Both are proponents of a critical pedagogic approach to teaching and learning and believe that education

can ‘bring about conformity [or become] the means by which [individuals] discover how to participate in the transformation of their world’ (Freire, 2003:34). The authors question the role of experiential learning in undergraduate Criminology courses in providing the student with the opportunity to try out the uniform, behaviours, language and identity of the role they wish to take on (Higgins et al, 2012; LaRose Anthony, 2011; Payne et al, 2003), often without critical reflection. The authors’ positionality in this research was complex - shifting back and forth on the continuum of insider/outsider (as learner, lecturer/trip leader and researcher), with varying degrees of power (Ozano & Khatri, 2018). As reflexive researchers, the authors acknowledge their positionality in terms of their influence on “research design, data collection, analysis, and knowledge production” (Hsiung, 2008, p. 212) but argue that the self-reflection following a previous trip regarding self as academic/learner and experiencer was key to the development of this research.

The Division of Community and Criminal Justice (CCJ) has been providing educational trips to Krakow, Poland, including a visit to the former Nazi extermination and concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, for over six years, through an international visits programme. The trip, although available to all students in CCJ Division, is built into a third year Criminology module on International Perspectives where those who choose to take the trip can link their experience directly to their assessment task (a reflective essay or mixed media project on State Crime).

Based on anecdotal evidence, students on previous trips primarily reflected on their own learning through completion of the reflective assignment. Importantly, students drew links between theory and the lived experience of visiting Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial & Museum and made comments regarding thinking about what they learned and how they learned. Place, artifacts and survivor narratives were mentioned in terms of the impact of the experience and

were central to their increased understanding. They were also able to apply their learning on the trip to other examples of state crime. Furthermore, some demonstrated that they had an increased understanding that events/actions are located within and explicable by multiple perspectives and socio-political contexts.

Methods

The research was conducted with 21 undergraduate students who attended one of two trips to Poland in either February 2017 or February 2018 as part of their studies. The sample included students from across the range of programmes in the Division including Criminology and Criminology with Psychology, Policing Studies and Criminal Investigation. There were 16 females and 5 males. Ages ranged between 20-27 years. 18 out of 21 either stated 'no religion' or did not state a religion, with the remaining students identifying as: Hindu, Muslim and Catholic. 18 out of 21 were White British, 2 were British Asian and 1 was White European. During the briefing/debriefing sessions or interviews, 12 of the students identified that a grandparent had fought in World War II. Ethical approval was granted by the University's Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

The trips to Poland comprised a variety of activities focused on State Crime, as well as cultural events, and included an educational visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial & Museum. The students met with the trip leaders one month before each of the trips took place for a 'departure briefing' to discuss the itinerary, logistics (travel and accommodation) and cultural/legal imperatives. Students were given a printed itinerary that detailed the places/sites that would be visited each day. In addition to Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial & Museum, visits included: Schindler's Factory; a lecture at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and an historic tour of Krakow/Jewish Quarter. Any questions that the students had were answered during the

departure briefing. It was also important to consider the sensitive nature of the study and the potential for traumatisation and therefore the researchers included a group meal following the visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau in the itinerary. This facilitated a space to talk about the experiences with the researchers or their peers if they felt the need and to ensure that no-one was left without support. Students were also informed that they could speak to the researchers at any point during the trip and/or on their return to the University. The participant information sheet also provided signposting to personal tutor and wider student support services such as counselling.

The trips were immersive with students and staff spending five days together. For the authors, the immersive experience of being an academic/researcher and learner alongside the students, had both positive and negative impacts. It allowed the researchers to understand ‘meanings’ given to and reflections on ‘the experience’ because it was shared but as noted above, positionality, and power in particular, were key considerations.

The authors conducted a total of 42 narrative interviews (21 pre-departure and 21 post-return interviews). The pre-departure interviews were conducted in the two weeks preceding the trip and focused on student expectations, whilst post-return interviews were conducted two weeks after returning from the trip and focused on the students’ reflections and learning.

The use of narrative interviews was central to the research as it allowed the students to tell their story in their own words. It was also important because what we had asked them to see and hear during the visit to the former Nazi extermination and concentration camp were the personal narratives of those who survived and those who did not. The voices of those who have a lived experience of genocide are central to genocide education (see Harrison, 2016; Petrila &

Hasanovic, 2021). Interviews were conducted with limited interviewer involvement, as it was felt important to ensure a more equal and relational mode of interviewing, relinquishing some of our power, which both reflected and respected the students' ways of organising meaning in their lives (DeVault 1999). The pre-departure interviews required students to explore their expectations, assumptions and potential responses to the future experience particularly in terms of how they felt about going on the trip, what they thought it would be like at Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial & Museum and what they were hoping to gain/learn from the trip. The post trip interviews required the students to consider the visit as a specific life event and to tell the story of the visit in their own words. Once the students had told their story, the interviewer prompted them to consider any reflections on the experience since returning home.

Transcription was undertaken by the principal researcher. Students were provided with a *verbatim* transcript of their interviews and given the opportunity to add further comment and/or remove anything they did not want included in the data analysis. It was important that the students were actively engaged in the process of collation and presentation of their narrative as it was their story to tell and it ensured confirmability and credibility of the data. The interview data was then analysed by hand using performative narrative analysis (Riessman, 2001). Analysis of narratives can illuminate "individual and collective action and meanings, as well as the social processes by which social life and human relationships are made and changed" (Laslett 1999:392). The transcripts were reviewed and annotated for emerging themes, intonation/intensification of words or phrases, where segments contained enhanced detail, reported speech, any appeals to the researcher as audience, paralinguistic features ('uhms', laughter, pauses), movements (Bauman, 1986) and emotional responses. Social positioning - to self, interviewer, others in the narrative (Bamberg 1997, Harre and van Langenhove, 1999), for example as observer or agentic being (Riessman, 2001), were included in the annotation to

highlight the salience of particular scenes of the narrative to the individual. The interviewer also noted the performative nature of the narratives, particularly in terms of identity (the preferred self), the “performative struggle over the meanings of experience” (Langellier 2001:3) and the way in which this was made evident.

Findings

Prior to the trip students’ understanding of the Holocaust/genocide was limited, having been learned as part of the GCSE History curriculum on World War II and/or lectures on State Crime as part of their degree programme. Students expected the visit to increase their knowledge and deepen their understanding by seeing where a significant part of the Holocaust occurred and learning from someone [the guide] who was an expert:

S19 “...it is the experience of going, learning, just seeing what has happened in the past and if possible, of getting to speak to someone who knows more about it”.

A learning experience outside of the classroom was vital to students deepening their understanding and developing their ability to empathise. Students talked about being where it happened and seeing it for themselves and the understanding gained from this:

S1 “...you are now gonna be walking in the footsteps, or the same place where thousands of people died...I think that only clicks in when you begin to see it”

The Affective Dimension: Emotions & Feelings in the Social Context

The affective dimension was evident with students discussing emotions, feelings, moods and attitudes, both expected and realised. Students referred to five out of six affective learning dimensions (Martin and Reigeluth, 1999). The emotional and social dimensions were most referred to, and the aesthetic, moral and motivational dimensions were also discussed in detail following either personal or dialectical reflection; only the spiritual dimension was omitted by the students.

When considering the expected emotional context of the visit, one student felt the desire to immerse themselves in the experience, to be open to their own emotional responses and receptive to those of others. There was clear understanding of the social context of affectivity:

S16 "I will embrace the sadness and just put myself in there and, I don't know how to explain it, just feel it all, what everyone else is feeling, what I feel".

Along with acknowledging the social context of the visit, this student raises the unspoken social rules of what is fitting to feel (e.g. sadness, anger, disgust), as well as the expression and management of those feelings in a given social context. Other students identified similar concerns about not being able to laugh or joke because of how this would be perceived:

S3 "...we won't be able to have a laugh and a joke...you don't want to be disrespectful"

As discussed, visiting a site where crimes against humanity and human rights abuses were committed seemed to come with feeling rules and conventions, those things they were

expected to feel/not feel and how they would be expressed. There appeared to be a consensus about what is appropriate to feel (sadness, disgust) when visiting such sites but the students could not explain how they ‘knew’ these. The rules and conventions appeared to be part of a nonconscious cognitive process or unconscious appraisal that could only be partially verbalised in terms of the knowing, rather than how these were known. There was also recognition of what would breach such conventions in terms of feeling and non-feeling and related affects (laughing, joking). In total, eight students articulated such considerations in terms of paying respect to the victims of the Holocaust with their feelings and conduct.

As well as identifying the feeling rules themselves, students anticipated the affective penalty of breaching the feeling rules by not having the expected emotional response:

S6 “...there is something in the back of my mind that I’m going to feel really guilty if I don’t feel anything”.

This in itself prompted a response, with the student stating

S6 “I shouldn’t be feeling like this, it’s not about me”.

It was clear that the students’ own socialisation around feeling rules and conventions was fixed and they found it difficult to understand that contradictory feeling rules may apply to the same event.

Two fifths of students highlighted the behaviour of a group of Israeli school pupils, whom they perceived to be in breach of the feeling rules and conventions they themselves had accepted:

S13 “They were walking round confidently, almost boisterously, which I can understand, ‘cause it was sort of them standing up to it, saying like ‘we’re here and you didn’t beat us’...but I can remember finding it really uncomfortable...I felt like the reactions were quite normal in our group...that was so outrageous in my eyes, how they reacted to it”.

The students could not rationalise the empathy and understanding they had for the people who had been interned in the camps (the historical) with the affective response they had to the Israeli group of students (the contemporary). The students appeared unable to reflect upon the past and consider its relationship to the present when ‘unsuitable affects’ were present. The feeling rules and conventions were so entrenched that it impeded learning.

Critical Reflection

Central to the students’ learning was the process of critical reflection, both on a personal level and through group discussion. The shared learning experience created a common foundation from which to assess and even reassess their meaning structures through reflection. Critical reflection happened in two ways: personal reflection through self-dialogue and dialogic reflection where meanings were reassessed in discussion with peers. When personally reflecting on individual exhibits - shoes, hair etc they could relate this to others (family, friends etc) and understand this as ‘potential personal loss’ or spaces/places and confinement (felt on an individual level) and could imagine from seeing. Reflection appeared to be influenced by the aesthetic, moral and motivational dimensions of learning.

The return journey from Auschwitz-Birkenau was almost silent. Students conveyed that they ‘didn’t want to talk’ through non-verbal gestures (putting on headphones, closing their eyes,

looking out of the window). There was a clear need for solitude to provide the space to individually reflect before they could then discuss with others. One student was able to clearly articulate the silence on the journey back from Auschwitz-Birkenau as a time for personal reflection:

S2 “I think the journey back was like that immediate period of reflection... your brain has now got to process what actually happened”.

Personal Reflection

Students’ reflections centred around four common themes: the personal, place/space, the role of the guide and the past and its relationship to the present (re-contextualising the information). Three quarters of the students considered the impact of the exhibits, with most mentioning ‘the hair’ and ‘the shoes’ as something they had reflected on in terms of ‘the personal’ - putting themselves in someone else’s position:

S3. “I was thinking about my niece and how much I care for her...the small shoes...I was putting myself in the people’s position of being separated from their children”

Two-thirds of the students discussed reflecting on the place ‘where it happened’. Many had expected Auschwitz to look as it did, as they had seen pictures, but most students highlighted the size and scale of Birkenau in particular:

S8 “You obviously know how many people were there and you see the size and scale of it...the vastness”

One student talked about the ‘spaces’ and ‘places’ of both Auschwitz and Birkenau camps but felt Birkenau had impacted more deeply in terms of their thinking about how confinement was experienced:

S11 “You’ve got all this space in the world but you’re still confined”

This student then went on to reflect on the structure of the site (the barracks, gas chambers and spaces in between) and how every aspect felt it had been created with malicious intent:

“The spaces in between the places are just as bad as the places themselves...they are just as evil and malicious as the actual gas chambers”.

Students reflected on the role of the guide stating that it was vital in contextualising and explaining what happened. The guide’s knowledge and their ability to share the chosen narratives enhanced the learning experience and learners’ understanding:

S1 “The guide...what they knew and explained put everything into context...if they weren’t there it would be harder to understand”.

Although students felt the guide ‘added’ to the learning experience for the most part, one felt the experience of being on a guided tour made it too contrived and that some opportunities for personal transformation were missed through students lack of agentic participation in the learning process (Taylor, 2000):

S13 “She [the guide] was able to talk to us about quite a lot but it felt like we also missed a lot of buildings because she was taking us to the ones she wanted to take us to, rather than giving us the chance to walk around”.

Four students reflected on what had happened there which helped them make links between the past and its relationship to the present and the future when considering genocide:

S12 “It just made me think...this stuff goes on all the time...it isn’t always called genocide but it’s the same thing...it’s still going on now”.

Reflection through Dialogue

Later when reflecting further, students felt the need to discuss their experiences with others by participating in critical-dialectical discourse, particularly with those whom had shared the experience. Students commented on how the group experience aided their ability to make sense of the experience and understand the issues better:

S13 “...it was the fact that you could go and talk to someone about it after...having the group there, that had been there themselves and they’d experienced it made a difference to how we made sense of it afterwards’.

Six of the students dialogically reflected on the issues of why and how people could do what they did, including issues of conformity, authority and self-preservation:

S21 “I was thinking, ‘why would you work here...knowing what would happen’ and one of my friends said, ‘they really didn’t have a choice...they were forced into these things’. I don’t know what I’d do, what my kind of own consequences would be for that action”.

Another student noted that they would use the experience to revisit prior learning to understand the factors that made people take a course of action that did not necessarily accord with their own moral viewpoint:

S14 “We were discussing it [why people did what they did] ...and I said we need to look at the results of all these studies [Milgram, Zimbardo] and actually look at why those results were the way they were...I don’t think I would have thought about it in that way if I hadn’t been on this trip”.

Perspective Transformation

Perspective transformation was evident across most of the student group to varying degrees. ‘*Respect*’ was repeatedly mentioned by the students. When discussing the feeling rules and conventions, students’ discourse incorporated the term through mention of being respectful, or not being disrespectful. Their discourse was framed in terms of how they, the students, would be perceived within the social context. It was also how they judged the behaviour of others. The later use of the term *respect* took on a new meaning and was applied in terms of attaching value to others and their experiences through esteem, regard, and admiration:

S4 “I’ve got a new found respect for everyone that’s been through the war, its completely changed my view”

A number of students explained that the guided tour had facilitated the internalisation of 'respect' as a personal value:

S14 "It did help me internalize everything a bit more...I can take everything in and apply it to everyday life and approach things differently, have more respect and things like that".

Action

Central to transformative learning theory and underpinning most genocide education projects is the expectation that the learner/visitor, following a perspective transformation, will do something with the experience. Transformative learning requires learners to not only see but to live the new perspective and to make informed decisions to take appropriate action. For one of the students, they felt it had changed their practice working within communities because they had a better understanding of the effect of their actions on others:

S2 "...when dealing with people from certain communities you will be more respectful as to their history and backgrounds...how you interact and talk with that person"

Another student spoke about how his friends would joke about particular communities and how he would have previously joined in. He stated that he could not do that now, as the experience had changed his views. He noted that even a friend had noticed it had changed him:

S19 "I don't make passing comments, I won't make light of the situation...now I've been there its completely changed my perspective"

Although some students demonstrated that the perspective transformation had led to action and change of behaviour, for most it was still a desire to do something but the 'appropriate' action was not yet defined:

S13 "I came away wanting to sort of defend anything and anyone after that"

However, some students remained disoriented by their experience and their feeling that they did not know what to do and lacked the confidence and skills to 'do' was a barrier to them actually 'doing':

S14 '...it would be a case of how you go about it...I don't know'

To overcome the lack of confidence, two students suggested that collective action should be considered as part of genocide education:

S14 "I feel like I can't do a lot...if there were enough people around me...I think it's like knowing you've got that extra support network to make a change. I think that needs to be pushed in order for people like me to feel like I could actually make a difference".

Conclusion

Genocide education through guided tours of memorial museums have sought to have an impact on learners/visitors to bring about a perspective transformation through an affective learning environment but until now there has been little to no evaluation of the factors that facilitate or impede this process. The objective of this article has been to evaluate a guided tour of the former Nazi extermination and concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau through the use of narrative interviews with a sample of 21 undergraduate students studying in one division of one school in one UK University. The interviews allowed students to provide their expectations and reflections on the experience and discuss any transformation in terms of emotions, worldview/perspectives and action. The use of narrative interviewing enabled them to tell their story in their own words.

Although the sample is relatively small the results are consistent and this has allowed for some important points to be raised. Firstly, the students identified both an expected and realised ‘affective dimension’ to the trip and therefore their learning (Dirkx, 2008). Much of the discussion of the affective dimension was related to how they would be/were perceived (social context) in terms of expressed emotions and was directly underpinned by internalised feeling rules and conventions (Hochschild, 1979). These feeling rules and conventions appeared to be generated at the nonconscious level (Taylor, 2001) and appeared relatively fixed. Students identified a shared understanding of the feeling rules and conventions associated with visiting a memorial museum; sadness, anger, disgust, being respectful but could not understand or rationalise unsuitable affect when it was presented (Goffman, 1961). This seemed to disrupt the affective dimension of learning in terms of both the emotional and social aspects. There was, however, consideration of the need to pay their respects to victims of genocide with ‘no less than their feelings’ and therefore their conduct (Hochschild, 1979:552).

Secondly, students felt that their understanding of the Holocaust, and genocide more broadly, had increased significantly. Students critically reflected on what they had seen in terms of exhibits and place/space and articulated how this had enhanced both their learning and development of empathy. The opportunity to 'see where it happened' was central to the transformative experience. A number of authors have discussed the need for us to 'see' to believe; Slovic et al (2017) discussed iconic photographs triggering empathy whilst Berger (1972) observed that we learn a great deal from our senses including our visual sense. Most suggested the experience of learning outside of the classroom had led to a deeper understanding than could be provided in a formal setting (Bajaj, 2016; Wright, 2000) and a perspective transformation, with a new found respect for those who had been through the war and for communities more generally, being the primary change.

Thirdly, the shared experience was important for critical-dialectical reflection and for deepening understanding (Maclellan, 1999; Mezirow, 2003). As noted by Taylor (2008), the need for solitude following the disorienting dilemma was vital for personal reflection – to make sense of the experience on an individual level. This needed to be followed up with dialogic/dialectical reflection with those who shared the experience to cement the new frames of reference and changed world views through shared meaning-making (Mezirow, 2003). The opportunity to reflect was provided but was not built-in to the visit - in particular dialectical reflection was instigated by the students themselves because of the shared experience and was driven by a need to discuss with others.

The Guide in terms of being 'an expert' had a generally positive impact on student understanding but it was also recognised that the power of being 'the guide' and telling the story they wanted heard whilst preventing students' agentic participation limited the learning

for some (Taylor, 2000). Furthermore, the social context in which learning takes place and, in particular, the 'asymmetrical power relationships' (Mezirow, 2000:28) influenced the learning process. It is clear that the role of the educator [guide] is 'not to prescribe what [learners] think and learn' (Mezirow, 1998: 72), but should foster a learning environment where learners are able to make their own informed decisions that enables them to take 'effective, appropriate action' (Mezirow, 1998: 72).

For many there was a desire to take action but this was not always well defined. Merriam et al (2007:135) state 'when one has learned what actions are needed in a situation, only then can change occur'. It is argued that 'action' did not always manifest clearly as the students were not shown, in this instance, what actions they could take. Having the skills to develop a course of action and being confident to implement it are key (Taylor, 2008). The expectation of action is there in genocide education projects and memorial/museum visits, but the skills to act are not part of the narrative presented. Students were unable to build confidence and plan their own course of action because they did not know what to do or where to start. Reflections around feelings of inadequacy and confidence to act (Taylor, 2008) were responded to by consideration of taking potential action 'in collaboration with others' if-and-when they knew what they could do. It is therefore essential to provide visitors with examples of micro-level actions they could take so that they have both the confidence and skills take effective, appropriate 'action' (Mezirow, 1998).

One of the limitations of this study was the follow-up interview at two-weeks post trip. One of the challenges for peace/genocide education and transformative learning more widely is that the intended educational goals may take time to be realised (Baumgartner, 2002). Scholars within the transformative learning field have called for 'ongoing longitudinal...studies'

(Taylor, 2000: 323) to consider the developmental nature of transformative learning. Follow-up interviews at six months would have given students more time to reflect and work through the experience with a further follow-up a year or two later to provide students with the opportunity to live the new perspective and ensure the transformation is stable (Baumgartner, 2001, 2002).

Transformative learning would suggest there are ideal conditions for the full realisation of learning, which 'can serve as standards for judging the quality of education and... conditions that facilitate or impede learning' (Mezirow, 1997:11). The authors' consideration of Hochschild's (1979) feeling rules and conventions and the disruption caused to the affective dimension by the presence of 'unsuitable affect' (Goffman, 1961) demonstrates that much can still be learned about what facilitates or impedes transformative learning. Understanding the affective and social context and its impact on quality of learning should provide educators with a clear rationale for selecting the most appropriate pedagogical tools and educational contexts for maximum personal transformation of the learners. Educators must provide time for reflection and examples of action that can be taken. This can be facilitated in collaboration with others, both at the site of the learning experience and when students return to their familiar environment.

References

- Aedo, M. P. Santiago Peredo, S., Schaeffer, C. (2019) From an essential being to an actor's becoming: political ecology transformational learning experiences in adult education. *Environmental Education Research* 25:1, pages 33-45.
- Ardizzzone, L. (2001) Towards Global Understanding: The Transformative Role of Peace Education. In *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 4(2):17-25
- Arnold, J., and Brown, H. (1999) A map of the terrain. In *Affect in Language Learning*. Arnold, J. (Ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Bajaj, M. (2016) In the Gaze of Gandhi: Peace Education in Contemporary India. In M. Bajaj and M. Hantzopoulos, (eds) *Peace Education: International Perspectives*, Bloomsbury: London, (pp. 107-122)
- Bajaj, M. and Hantzopoulos, M. (2016) *Peace Education: International Perspectives*, Bloomsbury: London
- Bamberg, M. G. W. 1997. "Positioning Between Structure and Performance." *Journal of Narrative and Life History* 7(1-4):335-342.
- Bartuś, A (2019) On How to React to Evil: A Visit to Auschwitz and Attitude Shaping. In P. Trojański (ed) *Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust at Authentic Memorial Sites: Current Status and Future Prospects*, Oświęcim, Poland: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

- Bartyzel, B (2019) 'Educational Challenges at the Authentic Auschwitz Memorial Site'. In P. Trojański (ed) *Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust at Authentic Memorial Sites: Current Status and Future Prospects*, Oświęcim, Poland: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.
- Bauman, R. 1986. *Story, Performance, and Event: Contextual Studies of Oral Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Baumgartner, L. M. (2001) An update on transformative learning in *The New Update on Adult Learning*, S.B. Merriam (ed) *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 89:15-24 <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.4>
- Baumgartner, L. M. (2002) 'Living and learning with HIV/AIDS: Transformational tales continued', in *Adult Education Quarterly*, 53:1, 44-59
<https://doi.org/10.1177/074171302237203>
- Berger, J. (1972) *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin
- Brookfield, S.D. (1994) Tales from the dark side: A phenomenology of adult critical reflection. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 13: 203-216
- Brown, W. (2008) *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*, Woodstock: Princeton University Press.
- Cahour, B (2013) Emotions: Characteristics, emergence and circulation in interactional learning. In M. Baker; J Andreissen and S. Jävelä (eds) (2013) *Affective learning together: Social and emotional dimensions of collaborative learning* (pp. 52-70) Abingdon: Routledge

- Clark, M. & Wilson, A. (1991) Context and rationality in Mezirow's theory of transformational learning. *Adult Education Quarterly* 41(2):75-91
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0001848191041002002>
- DeVault, M. L. 1999. *Liberating Method: Feminism and Social Research*.
- Dirkx, J. (2008). The meaning and role of emotions in adult learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 120, 7–18 <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.311>
- Freire, P. ([1970], 2003) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum
- Goffman, E. (1961) 'Fun in Games', pp. 15-72 in E. Goffman, *Encounters*, Harmondsworth: Penguin
- Harre, R. and van Langenhove, L. eds. (1999) *Positioning Theory*. Malden MA: Blackwell.
- Harris, L.M. (1996) (Ed) *Peace education in a postmodern world*. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 71(3)
- Harrison, J. (2016) *Suspended Disbelief: Reflections on the Holocaust*, Rugby: GG Books UK
- Hicks, D (1988) (Ed) *Education for Peace*. London Routledge.
- Higgins, N., Dewhurst, E. and Watkins, L. (2012) Field trips as short-term experiential learning activities in legal education, in *The Law Teacher* 46(2): 165-178
- Hochschild, A. R. (1979) *Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure* in *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 85, No.3 (Nov, 1979) pp 551-575

- Hsiung, P. C. (2008). Teaching reflexivity in qualitative interviewing. *Teaching Sociology*, 36, 211–226.
- Illeris, K. (2002) The three dimensions of learning: Contemporary learning theory in the tension field between the cognitive, the emotional and the social. NIACE, Leicester.
- Illeris, K. (2004). Transformative learning in the perspective of a comprehensive learning theory. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 2, 79-89
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344603262315>
- John, V. M (2016) Transformative learning challenges in a context of trauma and fear: an educator's story, *Australian Journal of Adult Learning* 56 (2): 268-289
- Langellier, K. 2001. “‘You’re Marked’: Breast Cancer, Tattoo and the Narrative Performance of Identity.” In *Narrative and Identity: Studies in Autobiography, Self, and Culture*, edited by J. Brockmeier and D. Carbaugh. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- LaRose Anthony, P. (2011) Field Trips: Pedagogical gold or drive-by education? *Academy of Criminal Justice Science*, 36(2), 1:4, 6-11
- Laslett, B. 1999. “Personal Narratives as Sociology.” Featured essay, *Contemporary Sociology* 28(4):391-401.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). *Emotion and Adaptation*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Maclellan, E (1999) Reflective commentaries: what do they say about learning? *Educational Action Research*, 7:3, 433-449 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09650799900200098>
- Maiese, M. (2017) Transformative Learning, Enactivism, and Affectivity, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 36: 197-216 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-015-9506-z>

- Mälkki, K. (2010). Building on Mezirow theory of transformative learning: Theorizing the challenges to reflection. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 8(1), 42–62
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344611403315>
- Martin, B., & Reigeluth, C. (1999). Affective education and the affective domain: Implications for instructional-design theories and models. In C. Reigeluth (Ed.), *Instructional-design theories and models*. London: Erlbaum.
- Merriam, S.B., Caffarella, R.S., Baumgartner, L.M. (2007) *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide* (3rd edition), San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass
- Mezirow, J. (1978) Perspective Transformation, in *Adult Education* 28(2): 100-110
<https://doi.org/10.1177/074171367802800202>
- Mezirow, J. (1981) A Critical Theory of Adult Learning and Education, in *Adult Education* 32(1): 3-24 <https://doi.org/10.1177/074171368103200101>
- Mezirow, J. (1991) *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Mezirow, J. (1997) ‘Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice’. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 74: 5-12 <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.7401>
- Mezirow, J (1998) Transformative Learning and Social Action: A Response to Inglis. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 49(1): 70-72 <https://doi.org/10.1177/074171369804900109>
- Mezirow, J. (2000) “Learning to Think Like an Adult: Transformation Theory: Core Concepts.” in J. Mezirow and Associates (eds.) *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

- Mezirow, J. (2003) 'Transformative Learning as Discourse'. Journal of Transformative Education. Vol.1, 1: 58-63 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344603252172>
- Mezirow, J. (2009) An overview on transformative leaning, in K. Illeris (ed) Contemporary theories of learning. Learning Theorists...in their own words, London: Routledge pp 90-115
- Ozano, K., Khatri, R. (2018). Reflexivity, positionality and power in cross-cultural participatory action research with research assistants in rural Cambodia. Educational Action Research, 26, 190–204.
- Payne, B. K.; Sumter, M. and Sun, I. (2003) Bringing the field into the criminal justice classroom: Field trips, ride alongs and guest speakers. Journal of Criminal Justice Education, 14, 327-344
- Petrila, A. and Hasanović, H. (2021) Voices from Srebrenica: Survivor Narratives of the Bosnian Genocide, Jefferson: McFarland and Company
- Podolska, J. (2019) What do the Stones Tell Us? Education and Memory of the Place: The Example of the Bałuty District and the Łódź Ghetto in the Activity of the Dialogue Centre in P. Trojański (ed) Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust at Authentic Memorial Sites: Current Status and Future Prospects, Oświęcim, Poland: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.
- Reardon, B.A. (1988) Comprehensive peace education: educating for global responsibility. New York: Teachers College Press

- Reardon, B. A. (2000) Peace Education: A Review and Projection. In B. Moon, M. Ben-Peretz and S. Brown (eds) Routledge International Companion to Education, New York: Routledge pp397-425
- Riessman, C.K. (2001). Analysis of Personal Narratives in J.D. Gubrium and. In J.A. Holstein (Ed.), Handbook of Interview Research: Context & Method (pp. 695-710). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.
- Scherer, K.R., Schorr, A., & Johnstone, T. (2001). Appraisal Process in Emotion: Theory, Methods, Research. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Slovic, P. (2007) Psychic Numbing and Genocide. American Psychological Association, Psychological Science Agenda, November 2007, Vol. 21, No.10. Science Briefs. Retrieved 13 Feb 2018 from <http://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2007/11/slovic.aspx>
- Slovic, P., Västfjäll, D., Erlandsson, A and Gregory, R. (2017) Iconic photographs and the ebb and flow of empathic response to humanitarian disasters. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, January 24, 2017, Vol 114, 4: 640-644
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1613977114>
- Taylor, E.W. (1998). Theory and practice of transformative learning: A critical review. Information Series No. 374. Columbus, Ohio: ERIC Clearing House on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
- Taylor, E.W. (2000) "Fostering Transformational Learning in the Adult Education Classroom. The Canadian Journal of the Study of Adult Education, 14, 1–28.

Taylor, E.W. (2001) Transformative learning theory: a neurobiological perspective of the role of emotions and unconscious ways of knowing. *International Journal of Lifelong Learning*, 20(3), pp218-236.

Taylor, E.W. (2008) 'Transformative Learning Theory', in *Third Update on Adult Learning Theory*, S.B. Merriam (ed) *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 119, 5-15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.301>

Taylor E.W. (2017) Transformative Learning Theory. In: Laros A., Fuhr T., Taylor E.W. (eds) *Transformative Learning Meets Bildung. International Issues in adult Education*. Sense Publishers, Rotterdam pp17-29

Wright, M. C. (2000) "Getting More Out of Less: The Benefits of Short-term Experiential Learning in Undergraduate Sociology Courses", *Teaching Sociology*, 28(2): 116-122
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1319259>